

Musical interlude is the highlight

WYCOMBE players now know what it's like to bang their heads against a brick wall after a goalless draw with Leatherhead at Loakes Park on Tuesday night, writes MICHAEL KNOX.

Leatherhead came with one intention — not to concede a goal — and they achieved that limited ambition thanks to a thoroughly well-disciplined defensive performance and Wycombe's attacking ineptitude.

The visitors did not make it easy — they had only one man upfront all night — but Wanderers lacked any ideas as to how to break down a tight defensive formation. So, despite having the vast majority of the territorial possession, they managed precious few shots on target.

Fielding the same side that had dazzled Tooting the previous Saturday, Wanderers started optimistically and Steve Hardwick, who had an outstanding game at the back, was just off target with two back headers from near post corners.

But apart from one close shot by Terry Glynn, that was about all the goalmouth action during the first half and the pattern continued after the break.

Wycombe struggled because of sub-standard performances by some of their players.

Sleepless

Howard Kennedy, who has just become a father for the first time, looked as though he had had a few sleepless nights of late, while striker Gary Toll appears to have lost all confidence.

What is worse; he seems to be losing the confidence of

Wycombe Wanderers 0, Leatherhead 0

some of his colleagues. He does not look at all sharp — he might even be a little overweight — and on Tuesday night was as slow as the proverbial carthorse. A spell in the Reserves might do him a world of good.

So when Tony Price started warming up along the touch, it seemed that Toll might be the one to go. But instead, Mick Holifield came off — to some sympathetic cries from the terraces.

Price made an immediate impact with a searing 30-yard run down the middle and a left foot shot just off target, but thereafter, he, too, became demoralised against Leatherhead's tactics, which included the occasional piece of shirt-pulling in dangerous situations.

Gradually the heads began to drop, and the longer the match progressed the less likely it was that the Blues would score. Indeed Leatherhead with a few adept breaks, created a few chances of their own in the closing stages.

A neat run and through ball by John Doyle put Bonner in the clear with only Gary Lester to beat. However he shot straight at the 'keeper with what was probably the best chance of the night.

Musical turn

So a 0-0 scoreline surprised nobody but at least it extended Wanderers' unbeaten run to seven matches. But these are games that must be

won if they are to make a realistic bid for the championship this season.

Most of the best entertainment of the night was provided by committee man Bill Cleere and his struggles with the loudspeaker system.

Due to an intermittent fault, the music could be heard only in short bursts. Unfortunately one of those occurred when he was trying to read out the team.

Mr Cleere persisted in his attempts to get the music heard and this led to the referee having to delay the start of the second half 'because of the noise'.

WYCOMBE: G. Lester; P. Birdseye, G. Borg, R. Davies, S. Hardwick, R. Dell, S. Long, H. Kennedy, T. Glynn, G. Toll, M. Holifield (sub.: A. Price 64 mins).

LEATHERHEAD: P. Casewell; S. Dixon, C. Brooks, M. Cooke, D. Dyer, D. Malley, B. Davies, M. Hinshelwood, D. Bonner (sub.: C. Weiman 89 mins), T. Page, J. Doyle.

Referee: R. Smith (Middle Barton). Attendance: 753.